
Title: The Travels of Fedoso

Author: Verderis

The Travels of Fedoso

Part 4

Volume 43

I split the mamluk's
legacy
With the pirates, made
my way
To Karmona's rangy
ramparts,
Where I bought a
sumptuous house.
City of flowers, gold and
citrus!
Leather and jewelry and
books...
Though these all were
fair distractions,
I refused them for a
vice.
In a public square I idled
Day to day upon a bench;
There I drained off
countless tankards,
Carved a circle in each
stoup.

Eight sat by my side one
morning
As the ouds began to
thrum;
Once reciter posed before
me,
Winked and crudely
chirped his lay:
"I have sung for many
rulers,
(Their glory faded, as has
mine...)
Princes just and great in
power.
(Their glory faded, as has
mine...)
"King tramples king, son
after father,

(Their glory faded, as has
mine...)

Each one hopes his crown
will prosper.

(Their glory faded, as has
mine...)

"Alexander was the
proudest,
Ruler of the earth itself;
Of his kingdoms, all have
crumbled,
Columns shattered in the
dust.

"Etzel, nicknamed Scourge
of Heaven,
Died of gluttony, poor
beast!

Caesar steered the Latin
armies,
'Til the Senate did him
in.

"Hrethric of the Danes
was murdered,
Hrothulf got his just
reward;
One-legged Gunther fell
and foundered
As the Hun-tribes flooded
in.

"Aegeus drowned from
simple error,
Og of Bashan, Moses
slew;

Cleopatra called for
venom,
Kshatra's cunning led to
doom.

"Hear the sorrows of the
Banings!

Witness scores the
Hundings smote!

Fear the Franks and
mourn the Myrings,
Flee the tumult of the
Goths!

"I was with the Swedes
and Saxons,

I was with the Greeks
and Finns;

I was counted with the
Persians,

I supped in the Angles'
halls.

"Scots and Langobards
and Hebrews,
Romans, Gefthas, Wends
and Picts,

Jutes, Egyptians and
Burgundians--
All have flourished, all
have failed!"
Here the poet paused and
gargled
With the dregs poured
from my cup;
Then in tones that only I
heard,
Thus the minstrel closed
his speech:
"Water deep or water
shallow
Cannot bury me for long.
Soon I'm dry and
searching pastures
For the mouse that
gnawed my cords.

"Here you loll in middling
splendor
While great nations break
and fray.
You're in need of one
more lesson,
Then all debts shall be
repaid."
In a flash of flavid
lightning,
We were skimming over
hills
Toward a blue and gray
horizon
Where grand monuments
decayed.